

Message Text

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UNCLAS ATHENS 1452

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, CY

SUBJECT: CLERIDES CONSULTS IN ATHENS PRIOR TO VIENNA TALKS

REF: ATHENS 1389

1. GREEK CYPRIOT LEADER GLAFKOS CLERIDES VISITED ATHENS FEBRUARY 15-16 TO TOUCH BASE WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AND OTHERS PRIOR TO THE OPENING IN VIENNA TODAY OF THE NEXT ROUND OF THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS ON CYPRUS. CLERIDES, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS AND SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT MICHAEL TRIANTAPHYLIDIS, ALSO CONFERRED WITH GEORGE MAVROS, LEADER OF THE MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY, I.E. THE UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER

2. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR VIENNA FEBRUARY 16, CLERIDES STATED THAT DURING HIS TALKS WITH THE GREEK LEADERS, THEY HAD EXAMINED THE CYPRIOT PROBLEM IN LIGHT
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OF THE FORTHCOMING ROUND OF TALKS AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN A

COINCIDENCE OF VIEWS ON ALL SUBJECTS.

3. ASKED AS TO HIS ATTITUDE WITH REGARD TO THE TALKS, CLERIDES REPLIED, "ONE CANNOT POSSIBLY TALKS OF OPTIMISM AT THIS POINT. WE SHALL SEE IN VIENNA HOW THINGS GO. IF THE TURKISHSIDE DOES NOT SUBMIT CONCRETE PROPOSALS OR VIEWS ON THE TERRITORIAL ISSUE, THE TALKS WILL DOG DOWN IN AN IMPASSE."

4. RESPONDING AS TO WHY HE THOUGHT EUROPEAN AND U.S. LEADERS FAVORED THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS, CLERIDES STATED THAT "THE WESTERN WORLD KNOWS THAT THE SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM WILL BRING CERTAIN ADVANTAGES." THE PROBLEM IS NO LONGER TO FIND NEW GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS....BUT HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE EXISTING RESOLUTIONS." IN ANSWERING A FINAL QUESTION FROM NEWSMEN ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS WITH THE CYPRUS QUESTION, CLERIDES NOTED THAT WHAT WAS DECIDED AT HELSINKI WAS "NOT AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT," BUT BUT ONLY THE EXRESSION OF THE IDENTITY OF VIEWS OF MANY STATES

5. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION POSED TO HIM UPON HIS ARRIVAL A DAY EARLIER REGARDING THE ATTITUDE OF THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT SHOULD THE TURKISH-CYPRIOT SIDE PROPOSE A SOLUTION INVOLVING CONFEDERATION, CLERIDES SAID: "OUR ATTITUDE HAS BEEN MADE QUITE CLEAR REPEATEDLY IN THE PAST. THE CYPRIOT SIDE DOES NOT ACCEPT CONFEDERATION. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO DECIDE, ONE SHOULD FIRST ASCERTAIN EXACTLY WHAT MR. DENKTASH HAS TO PROPOSE ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. FOR THE MOST SUBSTANTIVE POINT IN DETERMINING TO WHAT EXTENT A SYSTEM IS EITHER A FEDERATION OR A CONFEDERATION WILL BE JUDGED BY THE NATURE OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT HE WILL PROPOSE FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, AND THOSE FOR REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS."

6. AS IN THE PAST, CLERIDES' VISIT RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE MEDIA ATTENTION.
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